

Sharon Farren's Speech at launch of *The Prehistoric Footprints of Millom*, dedicated to
Duane Farren. 28th February 2026

Good Afternoon, and thank you all for being here. Duane would be so proud of people coming together to see and discuss his findings.

I would first like to say thank you to Jan for researching and writing the book in memory of Duane and for Millom and District Local History Society for trying to keep Duane's dream alive, and last but not least, to Margaret and Geoff and the committee of Holy Trinity Church for giving Duane a venue to do his talks and shows whilst trying to spread the word of his wonderful findings.

The footprints, animal prints and artefacts that Duane discovered on the Duddon Foreshore were his passion and life for the last nine years and his enthusiasm and excitement about them is something I will never forget and should never be forgotten.

He would come home so excited at what he had seen and found and sometimes spend all night documenting them and researching the finds.

They were not there all the time but he went down most days and tried to show as many people as possible whilst trying to protect and preserve the site. He was a guardian of the sands.

He did get people involved, which he was extremely grateful for as they did understand what he was doing and why. But one man, this far north of any big city or university, with no funding, was a job too big just for him.

I still laugh and smile when I think how excited he was at finding a full hazel nut within the clay deposits – to him it was like winning the lottery.

He would go with his rucksack filled with rulers, tape measures, pencils, plaster of Paris, a couple of cans of Scrumpy and always a toilet roll – only rain and darkness ever stopped play.

My house was full of hazel nuts, twine, charcoal, animal bones and whatever else he found in the peat and clay deposits.

He studied the tides and weather religiously hoping that the right combination of the two would uncover more of Millom's past.

Duane's one wish was always for Millom to be recognised for the wonderful rich history that it holds under the sands and soils of time by unearthing them a little at a time.

My one wish is for Duane's findings to never be forgotten and documented and made available so that future generations can explore the past like him – with the help of volunteers and archaeologists maybe more will be uncovered?

One day I hope that someone else can feel the thrill and sheer happiness that he did on the foreshore and have the same passion to unearth more of Millom's past.

Once again, thank you all for coming today and for keeping Dane's name alive.

Sharon Farren